

# AI in Academic Writing: A Comparative Study on the Effectiveness of ChatGPT Assistance and Students' Perceptions among University Learners

## ABSTRACT

Writing tasks remain a persistent challenge for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, primarily due to their limited lexical resources, grammatical inaccuracy, and unfamiliarity with the academic conventions. In recent years, the integration of AI tools, particularly ChatGPT, has introduced potential solutions to these challenges. Consequently, learners could create a proper outline, with high-level vocabulary suggested, and improve their grammatical accuracy throughout the writing. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of ChatGPT-assisted writing on the academic writing performance of university students by comparing self-written and AI-assisted essays. The study also seeks to explore students' perceptions of using ChatGPT as a writing support tool in the academic context. A mixed-method approach will be employed, along with the assistance of ChatGPT and other writing-checking websites to evaluate students' performance and experiences, perceived benefits, and concerns when using ChatGPT as a writing tool. The findings of this study are expected to provide insights for EFL educators on how to utilise AI tools effectively in EFL writing instruction to learners while assuring academic integrity.

Keywords: AI-assisted writing, university EFL learners, students' perceptions, comparative study

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